

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

S E C R E T ABUJA 001497

SIPDIS

NOFORN

AF/RSA FOR BITTRICK AND FRENCH
AF/W FOR FULLER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/29/2013

TAGS: [MARR](#) [MCAP](#) [LI](#) [ML](#) [SG](#) [GH](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH DEFENSE MINISTER: APCs, WARRI, MPRI

REF: A. STATE 240837

[B](#). ABUJA 1491

CLASSIFIED BY CDA RICK ROBERTS FOR REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D)

APCs

[1](#)1. (S/NF) CDA delivered REF A demarche on APCs for ECOMIL to Minister of Defense Kwankwaso on 29 August. Kwankwaso said he had not heard of Ghana's request that the GON provide APCs for the Ghanaian ECOMIL battalion. Kwankwaso and MOD PermSec Kaigama indicated the GON would consider the Ghanaian request once it has been made through the proper channels. Kaigama also noted that the Nigerian military's ability to sustain the APC deployment with the Ghanians would figure highly in the GON's decision whether or not to provide the APCs. (NOTE: DAO Abuja reported REF B that the Ghanaian request was made informally to President Obasanjo. Obasanjo then asked Chief of Defense Staff GEN Ogomudia for his opinion who, after consulting with the Chief of Army Staff LTG Agwai, recommended that Nigeria not fulfill the Ghanaian request. Kwankwaso was clearly surprised to hear of the Ghanaian request from us. END NOTE.)

[1](#)2. (C) As indicated in previous reporting, President Obasanjo will continue to bypass the civilians in the Ministry of Defense on important military issues. Kwankwaso, an outsider with no prior military service, is unlikely to be more than a placeholder while Obasanjo continues to make most major decisions for the MOD. Kwankwaso did not know whether the GON planned to name a more senior force commander for ECOMIL once it expands beyond the Nigerian contingent, and was unsure if Nigeria would continue its troop commitment in Liberia once the peacekeeping operation is handed over to the U.N.

[1](#)3. (C) RECOMMENDATION: Post has approached the MOD and NSA on this issue with little success. Future demarches, if necessary, should be directed to President Obasanjo. If necessary, Post can attempt to follow up with Obasanjo over the weekend. Obasanjo plans to visit the Nigerian battalions in Liberia on Monday. The occasion may present an opportunity for Embassy Monrovia to broach this issue with him.

WARRI

[1](#)4. (C) CDA asked what the GON's objectives were in "Operation Restore Hope" recently launched to bring stability to the area around Warri. Kwankwaso, noting that the situation on the ground in the Niger Delta region has been relatively calm of late, said the GON did not plan to deploy more soldiers to the area at present. He emphasized that the GON was doing everything possible to avoid human rights abuses and civilian casualties in operations conducted in the Delta, but also asked for USG understanding in the event that civilians get hurt.

MPRI

[1](#)5. (C) CDA noted Nigeria's payment of USDOLS 1 million for MPRI, and pursued payment of the remaining 2.5 million. The

Minister, while aware of the MPRI program and the need to secure funding for its future operation, said he had not been fully briefed yet on the issue by his staff. He plans on meeting with MPRI contractors soon. Post will continue to follow up with him and other key GON interlocutors.

ROBERTS